

# ECF Update

Volume 1, Issue 5

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## Court Information

- **ECF Help Desk**  
800-442-6850
- **Online ECF Help**  
[www.txnb.uscourts.gov/help](http://www.txnb.uscourts.gov/help)
- **Website**  
[www.txnb.uscourts.gov](http://www.txnb.uscourts.gov)



## ECF or Diskette Filing Document Types

### Petitions, pleadings

- PDF FORMAT (scanned documents)

### Matrices

- TXT (text) FORMAT

### Orders in ECF Order Upload

- WORD PROCESSING FORMAT (specifically, WordPerfect or Microsoft Word)

## Wireless Internet Access in Dallas Courtrooms

- The United States Bankruptcy Court, Northern District of Texas, has recently added wireless Internet access in the Dallas courtrooms.
- In order to take advantage of the wireless access, parties attending courtroom proceedings must have laptops with wireless PC card adapters or built-in wireless capabilities. To use your laptop to access case information during a hearing, please insure that your computer is properly set up for wireless access prior to entering the courtroom.
- The wireless SSID is: txnb0804
- Some wireless controllers will find this SSID automatically, while others must be pre-configured with this SSID. If you are unsure how to configure your computer, please seek the advice of your IT staff or other computer savvy persons. Courtroom personnel and the Clerk's office staff of the bankruptcy court will be unable to provide individual assistance. Once connected the Internet, you may use your browser to connect to [ecf.txnb.uscourts.gov](http://ecf.txnb.uscourts.gov).
- **Use your PACER login and password to enter the website. Do not use your ECF logon and password to connect to the website as ECF is utilized for filing and will allow only one free look at your filed documents.** With your PACER logon, you may access data for any case on file, subject to the usual PACER fees.
- Parties are expected to observe usual courtroom etiquette when using the wireless access. Be sure to turn off or mute the sound volume on your computer. Also avoid downloading streaming audio or video to reduce the impact on the bandwidth available with the DSL connection.
- The access available in the courtrooms is a traditional SBC DSL phone line that provides broadband access to the Internet. The network line is not part of, nor is it connected to, the Judiciary's Communications Network. No Internet firewall or virus protection is installed with the SBC DSL phone line so the usual precautions should be installed on your computer prior to connecting to the Internet.



## Important Notice to all ECF Filers

The Northern District of Texas Bankruptcy Court implemented a new and improved credit card payment process through Pay.gov on September 18, 2004. How-

ever, the way you pay your filing fees will not change dramatically. You will still receive a pop-up window at the completion of filing with

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## Closed vs. Dismissed (Back by popular demand)

When a case has been fully administered (which includes, but is not limited to, the debtor receiving a discharge or all plan payments being made), the case will be closed.

A closed case may be reopened for further proceedings, if necessary, by court order on motion and payment of the filing fee. The appropriate event to reopen a closed case is the **Motion to Reopen**.

When a case has not been fully administered, for example, incomplete schedules, non-payment of fee, fail-

ure to attend §341 meeting, the case will be **dismissed**.

An order dismissing a case is effective upon entry. There can be no further proceedings in a dismissed case unless the court vacates the dismissal order, thereby reinstating the case.

The appropriate event to vacate a dismissal order is the **Motion to Vacate Dismissal Order and Reinststate**. This event can be found in the Motions/Applications category, or Trustee/US Trustee category un-

der the bankruptcy menu.

Do not use **Set Aside** or **Reconsider** to docket this event. To assure the correct code is used, the generic **Motion to Vacate** has been removed from ECF. For motions other than **Vacate Discharge** or as above, **Vacate Dismissal**, use the **Motion to Set Aside**.

The flag in the upper right-hand corner of the docket report will reflect if the case has been "closed" or "dismissed."

## Important Notice to all ECF Filers

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the option to Pay Now, or Continue Filing. However, when you click Pay Now, the payment screen will have a new look! A very important change to note:

After you click Pay Now, a slightly different screen will appear. You will still select the appropriate card type, enter the credit card number, enter the expiration date, then click Continue. A Payment Summary and Authorization screen will appear. You must check the box next to "I authorize a charge to my card account for the above amount in accordance with my card issuer agreement."

You also have the option of having an email confirmation of the completed transaction sent to you by entering a valid email address. You will then click the Make Payment button to complete the transaction.

**Very Important:** Do NOT double-click the Make Payment button. Double-clicking may result in duplicate charges to your credit card.

A copy of the court's new On-line Credit Card Payment Guide can be downloaded at [www.txnb.uscourts.gov](http://www.txnb.uscourts.gov). It includes detailed instructions regarding the new credit card payment process.

## Removal or Destruction of Exhibits After Final Disposition of the Case

Local Bankruptcy Rule 9070.1 (b) which refers to the Local District Court Civil Rule 79.2 (b) addresses the disposition of exhibits and applies in all cases and adversary proceedings.

All exhibits in the custody of the court must be removed from the clerk's office within 60 days after final disposition of a case. The attorney who introduced the exhibits shall be responsible for their removal. Any exhibit not removed within the 60-day period may be destroyed or otherwise disposed of by the clerk.

## File Chapter 7 and 13 Cases Faster with Case Upload

Great news for debtors' attorneys! Case Upload can now be used to file complete cases as well as incomplete cases. Whether you have a complete case including the petition, all schedules, statement of financial affairs, creditor matrix, etc., or just the two-page petition and creditor matrix, you can file your case using Case Upload.

The only requirements for using Case Upload are: (1) you must create the upload files with petition preparation software, (2) your petition must be a Chapter 7 or 13 case, (3)

the petition must be in PDF format, and (4) you must have a creditor matrix prepared in text format.

The court will issue a notice of deficiency providing you with a deadline to file the required document(s) that were not included in the original filing.

The only requirement to use "File New Bankruptcy Case" option in ECF rather than Case Upload is when filing a case that was **NOT** prepared with petition preparation software, or when filing a Chapter 11 case. Chapter 11 cases must still be opened using

the "File New Bankruptcy Case" option under the Bankruptcy menu.

Case Upload is now the primary method for filing new Chapter 7 and 13 cases in ECF whether the case is complete or incomplete. So save time by filing all of your Chapter 7 and 13 cases using Case Upload. This makes new case filing in ECF much faster and easier. Questions/Comments: Contact the ECF Help Desk at **1-800-442-6850**.

## Refer to Existing Event(s)? More on Document Linkage

When you file a document related to another document already filed in the case, you must reference or “link” these entries. This helps ensure, for example, that hearings are set on appropriate events and involved parties are noticed.

Once you have selected the proper Bankruptcy or Adversary event, you may be prompted to refer to an existing event and to pick the appropriate event Category from the drop down list for that related

document. Below is each ECF Category appearing on the drop down list with commonly referenced events in that category.

If you are not sure how the event was originally docketed, you can:

- ♦ Choose all categories (select category at the top of the list and drag the mouse pointer to the end of the list), or
- ♦ Choose more than one category (select the first category, hit [Ctrl],

select additional categories from list).

***For additional information on document linkage, read “The Missing Link?” article in the July issue of the ECF UPDATE. Archive copies are on the website at <http://www.txnb.uscourts.gov/ecf/#ug>***

Category	Commonly Referenced Events
<b>Answer</b>	Objection, Response, Reply, and Answers (if filing in an adversary proceeding)
<b>Appeal</b>	Notice of Appeal, Cross Appeal
<b>Caseupld</b>	Chapter 7 and 13 voluntary petitions filed using petition preparation software, also Chapter 13 plans filed during Case Upload process
<b>Claims</b>	Objection to Claim, Notice of Assignment/Transfer of Claim, Withdrawal of Claim
<b>Cmp</b>	Complaint document filed in an adversary proceedings, Third Party and Amended Complaints, Counter/Cross Claims
<b>Court</b>	§341 Meeting of Creditors, Court Correspondence, Abstract of Judgment
<b>Crbatch</b>	Creditor-filed batch events such as Reaffirmation Agreement, Notice of Withdrawal of Claim, Notice of Appearance, Notice of Assignment/Transfer of Claim
<b>Crditcrd</b>	COURT USE ONLY
<b>Misc</b>	Chapter 11 ballot summary, Authorization for Pre-confirmation Disbursement, Joinder, Objection to debtor’s claim of exemptions, Reaffirmation Agreement, Schedules, Amended Answer to Complaint
<b>Motion</b>	All motions or applications
<b>Notice</b>	Notices such as Notice of Hearing, Notice of Appearance, Notice of Voluntary Conversion to Chapter 7
<b>Order</b>	All orders
<b>Plan</b>	All chapter plans, objection to confirmation of plan, and disclosure statement
<b>Trustee</b>	All trustee reports
<b>Utility</b>	COURT USE ONLY

### **PRACTICE POINTERS REMINDER**

*Please review our court's practice pointers regarding order submission available on-line at:*

*[www.txnb.uscourts.gov/judges/pointers](http://www.txnb.uscourts.gov/judges/pointers)*

*Proposed orders regarding motions with negative notice language should be submitted after the objection period has expired (+3 days for mailing).*

*Proposed orders regarding motions requiring a hearing should be submitted after the hearing and court's ruling.*

## **Automated Closing of Chapter 7 No Asset**

An automated program that identifies no asset Chapter 7 cases ready for closing will be implemented soon.

Chapter 7 no asset cases that meet closing criteria established in the automated program will be closed. Criteria include: first meeting held, discharge order entered, report of no assets filed, and no pending motions, deadlines, or fees due.

Cases which do not meet the criteria for automated closing will be researched by clerk's office staff. This feature of ECF allows courts to use

people and technology efficiently to achieve timely disposition of cases.

Our new closing program works in cooperation with the automated discharge program implemented this summer. As a result, some cases may meet the closing criteria immediately after the discharge order is entered and be closed the same day.

To avoid payment of the reopen fee to make subsequent filings in a closed case, please ensure your documents are filed before the objection to discharge deadline.

## **Event Update for Chapter 7 Trustees**

A couple of changes have been in ECF to assist Chapter 7 Trustees:

### **Withdrawal of No Asset Report -**

This is a new event that prevents Chapter 7 cases from closing in error when the court runs our AutoClose program. If you withdraw a no asset report filed previously, **please use this specific event rather than the Withdrawal event under Miscellaneous.**

**Notice of Intent to Abandon -** The Notice of Intent to Abandon event has been removed from the Notices category and moved to the Trustee/US Trustee category. You may notice that a 15-day objection deadline was also added. The Abandon event is still available under the Motions/Applications category. However, it carries a \$150 filing fee, so you will want to be certain of which event to file in the case.



## **Share This Newsletter**

The *ECF UPDATE* is sent to the email address the registered user provides upon ECF registration.

Unless you have added email addresses under your account (Utilities>Maintain Your ECF Account>Email information) or your ECF email is accessible by more than one user, the registered user may be the only person in your office who directly receives the *ECF UPDATE*.

If you have other people in your office who assist with electronic filing, pass along this e-newsletter to keep everyone informed!

## **Check that PDF Before You File**

Avoid attaching an incorrect PDF by viewing it first. When browsing for the PDF, select your file from the list with a left mouse click, then right click on the PDF and select Open from the drop down menu. This will open an Adobe Acrobat® viewer window so you can verify it is the correct and complete document you intend to file in ECF.

Close the Adobe Acrobat® window when you are done and continue docketing with peace of mind!



### ***ECF Update***

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